

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



Application No. 12907 of Howard University, pursuant to Sub-section 8207.2 of the Zoning Regulations, for a special exception under Paragraph 3101.46 for further processing under a campus plan to construct a classroom building accommodating a TV and film studio in an R-5-B District at the premises 2222 - 4th Street, N. W., (Square 3069, Lot 65).

HEARING DATE: April 11, 1979
DECISION DATE: April 11, 1979

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The subject property was filed, advertised and heard by the Board on the basis that the property was zoned R-5-B and the applicable paragraph of the Zoning Regulations was 3101.46. By Zoning Commission Order No. 75-11, dated February 12, 1976 the subject property was rezoned from R-5-B to SP, and by virtue of Zoning Commission Order No. 235, dated September 14, 1979, the property is now zoned SP-2. A college or university use is permitted in an SP-2 District as a special exception if approved by the BZA in accordance with Paragraph 4101.43. The standards set forth therein are essentially the same as those contained in Paragraph 3101.46, and the findings and conclusions of the Board would be identical regardless of the paragraph applied.

2. The subject property is located south of College Street, between 4th Street and 6th Street, adjacent to the Old Freedman's Hospital building on the Howard University Campus. The site is presently developed with a grassed area and two trailers. There is an asphalt driveway to the north of the site. Old Freedman's Hospital is presently used as classrooms by the School of Communications. The site of the proposed building is bounded on all sides by Old Freedman's Hospital Buildings.

3. The Howard University School of Communication is requesting a special exception to erect an interim facility capable of accommodating TV and film studios and classrooms adjacent to the present facilities of the school in the Old Freedman's Hospital building. This facility is necessary so that educational programs in communications may proceed.

4. The proposed special exception will permit the temporary location of a classroom, teaching and broadcasting facility on this Howard University Campus.

5. Howard University has recently received a grant for and has been licensed to operate television station WHMM, Channel 32.

6. The School of Communications is presently operating from five temporary trailers and a quonset hut, called temporary classroom "C", north of the College of Fine Arts and from the Old Freedman's Hospital building. These facilities do not meet FCC standards necessary to operate a television station.

7. The proposed facility will be three stories in height of concrete block construction. The building shall include video tape, news, film dubbing and dressing rooms, three studios and control rooms. The building will be soundproof.

8. The facility will not increase the current student population and the employees operating the station will be University personnel.

9. The increase in overall bulk occasioned by the building addition for the campus as a whole will be within the approved floor area ratio level. The bulk of the proposed building is within a court yard of the existing structure. It has very little street frontage. A small part of the proposed building that protrudes will have a pre-cast concrete face to match the stone work on the Old Freedman's Hospital building.

10. The Howard University Master Campus Plan previously approved by the Board, includes the eventual construction of a permanent School of Communications and School of Business located at 6th and Fairmont Streets next to the Miner Teacher College site. It is the desire of the applicant that the subject facility be approved on an interim basis until said permanent facilities, which are on the drawing board and part of the Master Plan, can be financed and erected. The Master Campus plan shows the proposed facility in an area designated as "Freedman's Square", a high density concentrated building which would also serve as a campus pedestrian node, open plazas, and campus amenities located between 6th Street and 4th Streets, bisected by Bryant Street.

11. The Department of Transportation by memorandum dated April 16, 1979 stated that there were no objections to the construction of the interim facility. It noted that there would be no changes in the Master Plan requirements for parking and circulation. The Board concurs.

12. The Office of Planning and Development in its report dated April 5, 1979 recommended that the application be approved on the grounds that the proposed building is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions. The Board so finds.

13. The Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1B made no recommendation on the application.

14. There was no opposition to the application.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND OPINION:

Based on the findings of fact, the Board concludes that the application for a special exception is in full compliance with the regulations under paragraph 4101.43 in that it is a permitted use and it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions. The Board concludes that the maximum bulk requirements are within the gross floor area prescribed for the SP District. The Board has approved a campus master plan which was submitted in accordance with Sub-paragraph 4101.431. The proposed facility is a reasonable interim use of a piece of property within the approved campus boundary. The Board further concludes that the special exception can be granted as in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning Regulations and will create no adverse affect on the use of neighboring property. Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the application be GRANTED.

VOTE: 4-0 (Theodore F. Mariani, Charles R. Norris, Chloethiel Woodard Smith and William F McIntosh to grant; Leonard L. McCants not present, not voting).

BY ORDER OF THE D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

ATTESTED BY:


STEVEN E. SHER
Executive Director

FINAL DATE OF ORDER: 12 JUN 1979

THAT THE ORDER OF THE BOARD IS VALID FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS ONLY UNLESS APPLICATION FOR A BUILDING AND/OR OCCUPANCY PERMIT IS FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDER.